

From the Bookshelf

'The Nation Is in His Debt' By Courtney Sheldon

Fulbright of Arkansas: The Public Position of a Private Thinker, Edited by Karl E. Meyer. Washington, D.C.: Robert B. Luce. 279 pp. \$3.50.

From the first year he entered Congress, internationalist Democratic Senator James William Fulbright has played the role of giant killer.

The chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee has jousted with such formidable adversaries as Clare Boothe Luce, Harry Truman, Joseph McCarthy, and John Foster Dulles. He fought the nomination of John A. McCone as director of the Central Intelligence Agency, and he apparently was the lone Washington official—among those consulted in advance—to advise against the Bay of Pigs invasion.

Columnist Walter Lippmann declares 'the nation is in his debt. The role he plays in Washington is an indispensable role. There is no one else who is so powerful and also so wise and if there were any question of removing him from public life, it would be a national calamity.'

The generous evaluation is not, of course, endorsed by Senator Barry Goldwater and others who find the Arkansas Democrat too "radical" for their tastes. The Republicans who were recently under attack by Senator Fulbright for what he regards as irresponsibility in the Cuban debate see him as a Democratic partisan.

Mr. Lippmann, who contributed the preface to this book, credits Senator Fulbright with being "the first American public man who realized that if Western Europe was to coexist with the Soviet Union it would have to unite. And he is the first responsible American statesman to be saying that the necessary counterweight to the development of the Communist power is a much closer

political and economic integration of the Western world."

The Senator was unmistakably an early advocate of a world organization of the United Nations type. Today he concludes "the failures of the UN and of other international organs suggest that we have already gone beyond what was internationally feasible. Our problem, therefore, is to devise processes more modest in their aspirations, adjusted to the real world of sovereign nation-states and diverse and hostile communities." He suggests a concert of free nations consisting of an inner community of North Atlantic nations and an outer community embracing the non-Communist world.

The contents of the Fulbright memorandum to President Kennedy, advising against United States participation in a Cuban invasion are generally known. "Fulbright of Arkansas," which is largely a collection of the eloquent pronouncements of Mr. Fulbright, publishes the memo in full. Mr. Meyer, an editorial writer for the Washington Post, compiled these documents and provides an interesting commentary with each.

Senator Fulbright has long been internationally acclaimed for his sponsorship of the Fulbright scholarship program. This admirable project alone has made it certain that the senator's name will be remembered far longer than most of his contemporaries in the Senate.

Mr. Meyer concludes that Mr. Fulbright has still to reach his full potential of influence as a legislator. Because he comes from a predominantly segregationist state, it is commonly felt he will not be named Secretary of State in these days of great sensitivity to race relations in the world. But President Kennedy may yet find an opportunity to call upon the independent-minded foreign policy specialist to become his Secretary of State.